

On Top Of The News

Email: news@arubatoday.com

Website: www.arubatoday.com

Thursday, November 26, 2009

*At the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa*

## Thanksgiving Dinner Three Ways

PALM BEACH – Executive Chef Hector Espinoza is busily preparing a veritable Thanksgiving feast for the resort's three restaurants in three different styles, casual, plentiful and elegant, all equally tempting! Casual dinner on the beach at Gilligan's Beach Bar & Grill includes Harvest Salad or Pumpkin Soup, Roast Turkey with Traditional Stuffing, Gblet Gravy, Cranberry Sauce, or Baked Virginia Ham with Rum Raisin Sauce, Almond Green Beans, Candied Yams, Mashed Potatoes, and Pumpkin Pie or Apple Pie, served from 6 to 10 p.m. for just \$23.95 p.p.

Laguna's plentiful Thanksgiving Gourmet Buffet features a fresh Salad Bar, Pumpkin Soup, Roasted Whole Butterball Turkey carved to order, Traditional Bread Stuffing, Gblet Gravy, Cranberry Sauce, Baked Virginia Ham with Rum Raisin Sauce, Mashed Potatoes,

Candied Yams, Green Beans with Almonds, Homemade Apple Pie, Traditional Pumpkin Pie, Peach Cobbler and Whipped Cream, served from 5 to 10 p.m., for \$23.95 p.p.

Thanksgiving's elegant dinner at the Sunset Grille restaurant, starts off with an Amuse Bouche, and continues with a choice of Pumpkin Soup or Harvest Martini Salad with a special Thanksgiving twist. The main course includes Slow Roasted Turkey, Gblet Gravy, Cranberry Compote & Baked Virginia Ham with Rum Raisin Sauce, Vegetable Medley, Whipped Sweet Potato Puree, Pecan Pie or homemade Pumpkin Pie both served with Whipped Cream and Vanilla Ice Cream, from 6 to 11 p.m. for just \$31.95 p.p. including a glass of white or red wine. Children under 12, pay \$15.95 ; Children 12-18, pay \$26.95.

Happy Thanksgiving from the Radisson! □



*New administration a strong presence*

## "Nos Aruba 2025" presents National Integrated Strategic Plan to stakeholders



Richard Visser, Michelle Winklaar and Mike de Mesas with volunteers of Nos Aruba 2025

PALM BEACH - The ballroom in the Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa was the venue for the official presentation of the National Integrated Strategic Plan, or NISP, by the volunteers and coordinators of the Nos Aruba 2025 project yesterday morning. This event was projected towards the individuals and



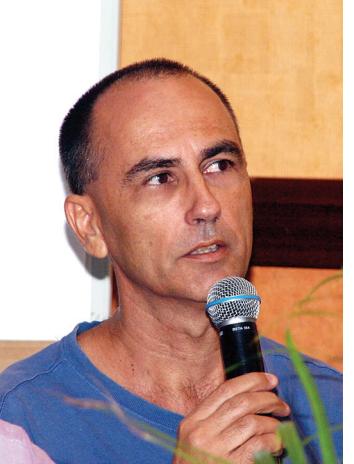
entities that would most be involved for implementation of the tenets of the NSIP, and was distinctly marked by a strong presence of top government officials, including the Minister of Finance, Mike de Meza, Minister of Economic Affairs, Social Affairs and Culture, Michelle Winklaar, Minister of Public Health and Sports, Richard Visser, with the welcome address made by President of Parliament, Andy Lee. Additionally present were several parliamentarians, directors of a number of key governmental agencies, and executives from Aruba's Chamber of Commerce.

Minister Lee reminded the gathering that even though Aruba, a tiny island in the Caribbean, has seen unprecedented growth in the 23 years since attaining Status Aparte and self-determination, it faces many internal and external challenges at present, which affects its potential for "sustainable development." He further expressed that the key element of guaranteeing Aruba's future is a process requiring dialogue and cooperation from all social levels.

*Continued on Next Page*



## "Nos Aruba 2025" presents National Integrated Strategic Plan to stakeholders



### Continued from Front Page

He lauded the volunteers of Nos Aruba 2025 for initiating this dialogue, as well as their persistence in bringing the purpose of the commission to the community through various projects and events.

Hosts and facilitators for the day were James v/d Linde and Zulema Dabian-Erasmus. Maria Dijkhoff-Pita of the Project Management Team and Director of the Department of Economic Affairs opened the presentations with an explanation of the process that has produced the NISP, to date. Wednesday's activities would also be incorporated into the finalization of the plan, as the afternoon sessions would consist of discussions with major stakeholders to acquire their valued input. "Both the

public and private sector of Aruba has shown concern for the direction of Aruba's economic development. Nos Aruba 2025 was to create this vision," she began. NISP has evolved from a National Development Plan that was contrived previously, but mostly involved only the public sector, for the government to implement; but it is the purpose of the NISP to involve the private sector as well. "Just like all countries in the world, we want to guarantee economic development this will help us sustain quality of life, unfortunately, we are dependent on only one economic sector," she pointed out. "On Aruba, because of the lack of communication and coordination between the public and private sector, there is a great waste of

human and financial resources with fragmented policies. Aruba being vulnerable in the international arena is another reason we require planning for the future; the present world crises effects us strongly, as does the fluctuating price of fossil fuels. An imperative for Aruba is to become far more fuel independent," she explained.

"Our goal is not only to devise the plan," continued Mrs. Dijkhoff-Pita. "The plan is a medium to reach our goal. Our goal is to empower Aruba to achieve its full potential by integrating strategies for social, cultural, economic and environmental developments. Further, we wish to stimulate coordination between all stakeholders in the public and private sector, civic society,

and all citizens in Aruba in designing this vision, and see the strategic and integrated planning process for sustainable development institutionalized. Twelve commissions to address particular issues were developed within the Nos Aruba 2025 doctrine; they worked together on the four strategies for development.

During the discussion session following the first presentations, several noteworthy comments came from the audience, in particular from Milton Ponson, who reminded the gathering that there are rules and guidelines set up by the United Nations regarding preparing frameworks for legislation of NISP laws. "We must bear in mind that as a small island in the Dutch Kingdom and a part of the international community

we must abide by international standards and guidelines; as part of the Dutch Kingdom we are party to dozens of international treaties...Before we commit to formalizing legislation for NISP and the processes therefore, we must have a reference document which shows how this will be in full compliance with all the international treaty obligations...It would be a very good idea to first look around what has been accomplished in the region, particularly in the Eastern Caribbean."

Finally, before the morning break, Leo Maduro of Aruba's Chamber of Commerce commented "What is proposed might work, but it won't work if we don't do the other things we have to do...one of our problems is we don't have a good reputation for implementing laws. For the moment, we have a big lake of law to be finished and it is ever growing, so we should see not to get drowned in all the legal projects we have. I think that we should start somewhere else."

"I think what is important is that this project has started the

basic things," noted Mr. Maduro. "The cooperation you see now, I have not seen for years; we have not seen this discussion and debate, this cooperation within government departments and a lot of organizations in the private sector. This is where this project is making a difference; this is what we have to build up. If you want to make it more concrete in a law, for me, that is of minor importance. What is important is that you do continue in a structured way; don't let it go, and you have to continue it forever." He mentioned that Holland and Sweden are not bound within the international community for the measures they have taken; they just did what was needed to care for the future of their nations, "they did the right thing," he concluded, "we can too."

Parliamentarian Andin Bikker disagreed, pointing out that laws would bind governments that would come after the present administration. "We need to supersede governments for the next 50 years- there needs to be a continuum. So we do need to have some sort of constitutional legislation, no matter how boring that may be. Barbados has crafted a similar plan and laid it down in legislation; we can look at what they have done and how they have done it."

Ms. Dabian-Erasmus mentioned this is the first true public presentation of the NISP, which they feel requires consolidating the development of the Aruban economy and sustained socio-economic development by means of diversification. Input from all sectors of society is welcome and to facilitate public involvement has established a website, [www.nosaruba2025.aw](http://www.nosaruba2025.aw). A full breakdown of the findings and plan of Nos Aruba 2025 and reports from the twelve committees can be found on their website where visitors can comment. □

NOVEMBER 28, 2009

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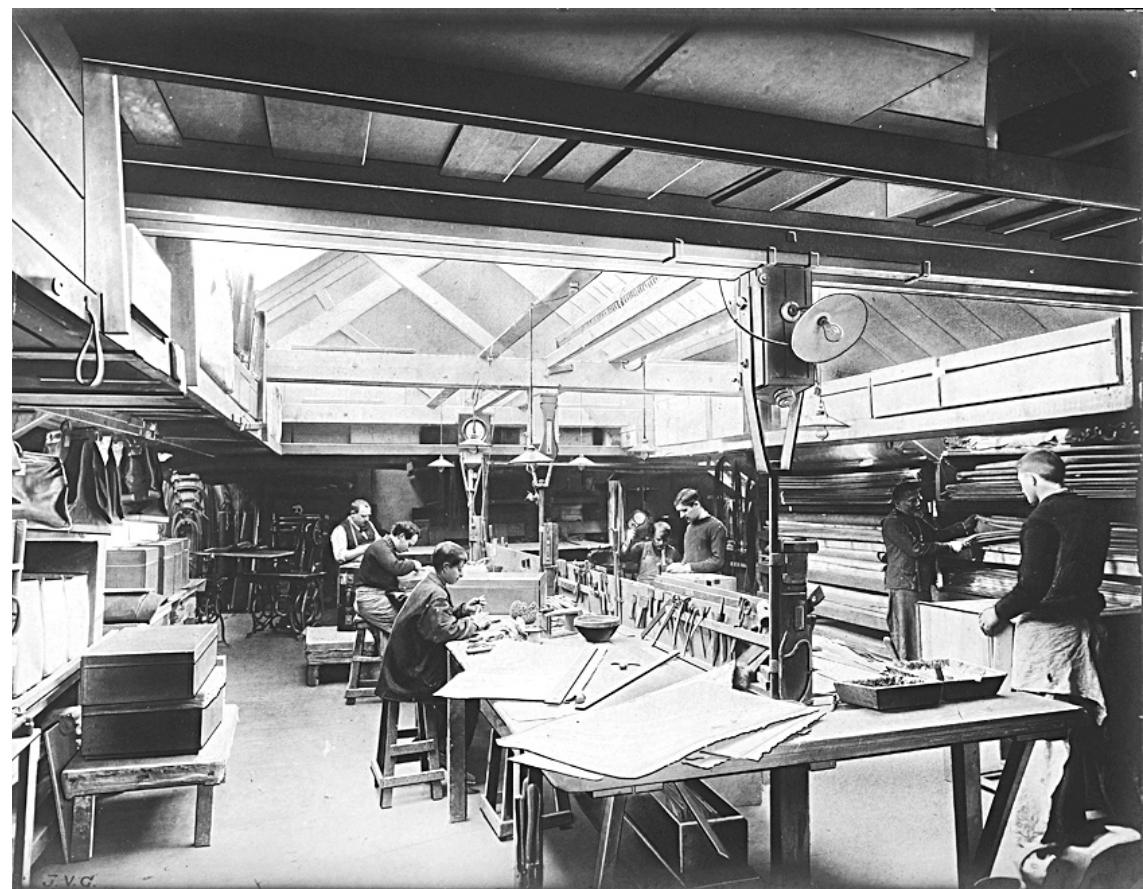
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Louis Vuitton

# The historic Asnières workshop near Paris has traditionally made all special orders

ORANJESTAD - Special orders are a glorious tradition at Louis Vuitton, which has always taken pride in fulfilling its customers' most exceptional requests. From the legendary foldout trunk-bed designed by Louis and Georges Vuitton for expeditions to far-flung corners of the globe to the solar powered DVD and Coffee secretary trunk, Louis Vuitton has devised countless elegant and ingenious ways to help its customers satisfy a specific need, express their individuality, or realize a dream.

The historic Asnières workshop near Paris has traditionally made all special orders. The department is personally overseen by Patrick-Louis Vuitton, representing the fifth generation of the founding family, who is himself a trained and talented craftsman. Louis Vuitton distinguishes between two types of special orders: made-to-order and custom-made. Made-to-order is an exclusive service allowing for selected items from the permanent collection to be interpreted in other materials. Custom-made pieces, meanwhile, are unique, one-off creations that elegantly reconcile the customer's wishes with technical considerations and established design codes, at the same time affording Louis Vuitton's craftsmen the opportunity to demonstrate their exceptional expertise. The essential condition for any special order is that it must respect the spirit of travel, being designed both to protect and to transport a customer's belongings. Patrick-Louis Vuitton is fond of quoting the words of Georges Vuitton, his great-grandfather, who used to say: "The main thing is to allow your personal effects to travel in the greatest possible comfort". □



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**Thursday**  
November 26, 2009

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**Salad Extravaganza**  
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# Ravenswood wines play starring roles



Much interest for fabulous Friends of Arion dinner at Que Pasa Restaurant

## ORANJESTAD

- There is much interest for the upcoming Friends of Arion/Que Pasa dinner, which is held on Friday, November 27. With well-known Ravenswood wines playing starring roles, many gourmands have picked up the phone to make a reservation already, but for those who have not had the chance to call, there are still a few tables available.

A three-course extravaganza at Que Pasa Restaurant in the Wilhelminastraat awaits them. The Friends of Arion/Que Pasa affair is open to everyone. Guests should be at Que Pasa at 7 pm for a complimentary 'bon bini' glass of wine.

Dinner is a combination of all-time favorites; including the Ravenswood wines. The first course is an amazing array of delicacies, consisting of goat



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cheese mousse with a honey glaze, shrimp filled with wahoo and a carpaccio of smoked Black Angus. The above is accompanied by a Ravenswood Vintners blend Merlot. The main course is either sirloin steak to with a Ravenswood Vintners blend Chardonnay from Sonoma, California is poured or grouper. A Ravenswood Zinfandel perfectly enhances the grouper, which is served with a celery puree. Dessert is a jelly of fruits and sangria, vanilla soup and papaya ice cream with coffee. □





# Experience Aruba's Seafood Sensation!

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"This hip restaurant is heaven on earth for seafood lovers"

Fodor's Travel Guide

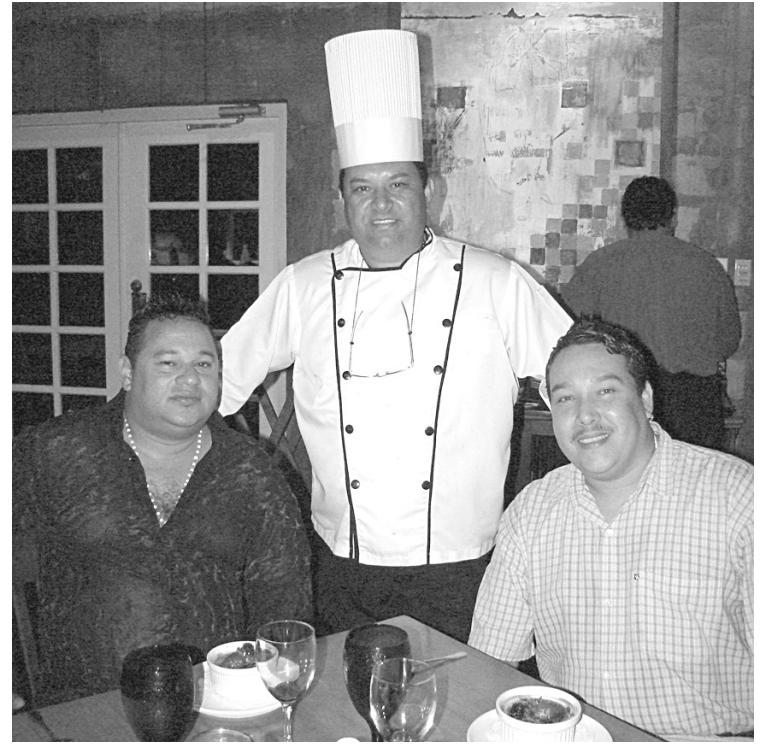


## Amazonia serves great food, also on Thanksgiving

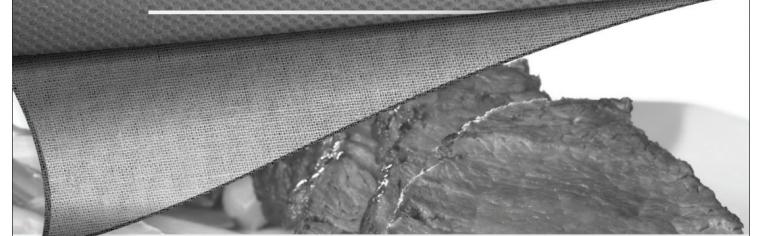


Palm Beach – Amazonia Churrascaria will be adding turkey to the menu on Thanksgiving day, surprising locals and visitors with a delicious traditional bird preparation. "Good food, is good food," say chef Victor, who is in charge of the restaurant's cuisine every day of the year including Thanksgiving, "it is easy to recognize," he continues, "and we intend to serve the world's best turkey, on Thursday!"

Pictured here Alberto Rodriguez and Eugene Maduro who decided to try the Amazonia Churrascaria feast for the first time this week and were pleasantly surprised by the abundance and the quality of the food. Joining in appreciation, five of her majesty's Royal Dutch Marines stationed on the island, who brought along huge appetites. Annika and Tony Storbäk, from Finland, staying at the Amsterdam Manor, on a two week honeymoon, flying in on a new charter from Sweden, loved every bite of grilled meat specialties, also the Lawrence family, from Pennsylvania, staying at Marriot Resort, for the first time in Aruba, on their honeymoon, though Amazonia Churrascaria was terrific. □



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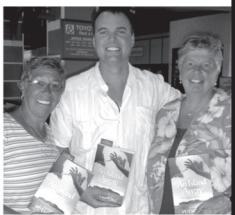
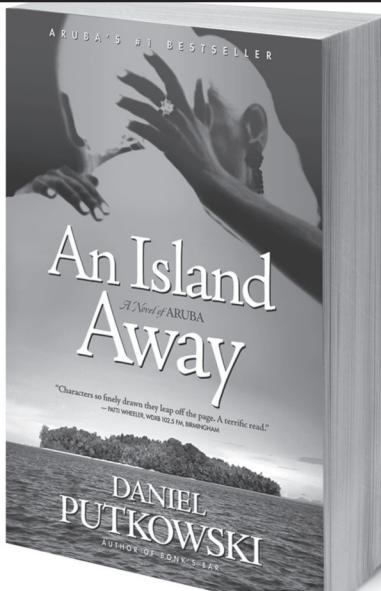
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## \*\*\* Human Hints \*\*\*

### Your Emotions Illuminate Your Path

Your emotions point to areas of your subconscious that offer opportunity for growth. Following your emotions to become aware of your subconscious can be emotionally trying, but the hard part is accepting what you find inside yourself.

This is one example of why Compassion is so important. Compassion leads to forgiveness, which allows

release and therefore freedom. It allows you to forgive others, thereby forgiving yourself, thereby releasing yourself from the potent spiritual poison of Guilt.

We are all Human, and we have all done things we're not proud of. We all understand the irresistible pull of three dimensional illusion. Humans on Earth at this Time all have similar forces that distort us

differently, depending on how we react to them. Have compassion for the Human Condition, and you will forgive yourself, releasing yourself from the guilt of your own past. Without guilt, you will have the courage to release the darkest corners of your own psyche.

Become aware of what stimulates your emotions, and ask yourself why you're emotionally involved. The situation will illuminate an area in which you must forgive yourself.

When you follow your emotions to your personal opportunities for self-empowerment, you know that you are on your personal path of growth. We each have many reasons for being in a three dimensional Human Body, and we each have a unique personal path to follow. Being aware of where the spotlight of our emotions point will keep us on our path. Through our emotions,

we show ourselves the areas of our life that require our forgiveness in order to grow.

When we don't forgive others, we don't forgive ourselves, and we create mental prisons that we choose to live inside for the rest of our lives. Don't lock yourself away just because it's easy. The cost of your life far outweighs the benefits of avoiding conflict in the moment. Let your emotions guide you to your opportunities for growth, then forgive yourself and grow!

You forgive yourself by having compassion for others.

Understand human suffering without pity, and you will set yourself free from the mental prisons that once protected you.

Find your unique contribution to Humanity, and reach out to express it. When you are connected and contributing your unique gift, you gain a deeper understanding of

the Human Condition that influences us all, for better and for worse.

The more understanding we can grasp about the forces we are all subject to, the more compassion we will have for each other and the more we will be able to forgive ourselves.

As your emotions rise and fall, pay attention to what triggers them. After the emotions have passed, analyze the situation logically, as if you're studying a screenplay.

When you see what triggers you, forgive yourself in that area of your life. The general intention of forgiving yourself in that area of your life will direct the appropriate energy to dissolve the guilt you probably don't even know is there.

Until Tomorrow...

### —Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has studied many avenues of alternative thought. Human Hints Daily is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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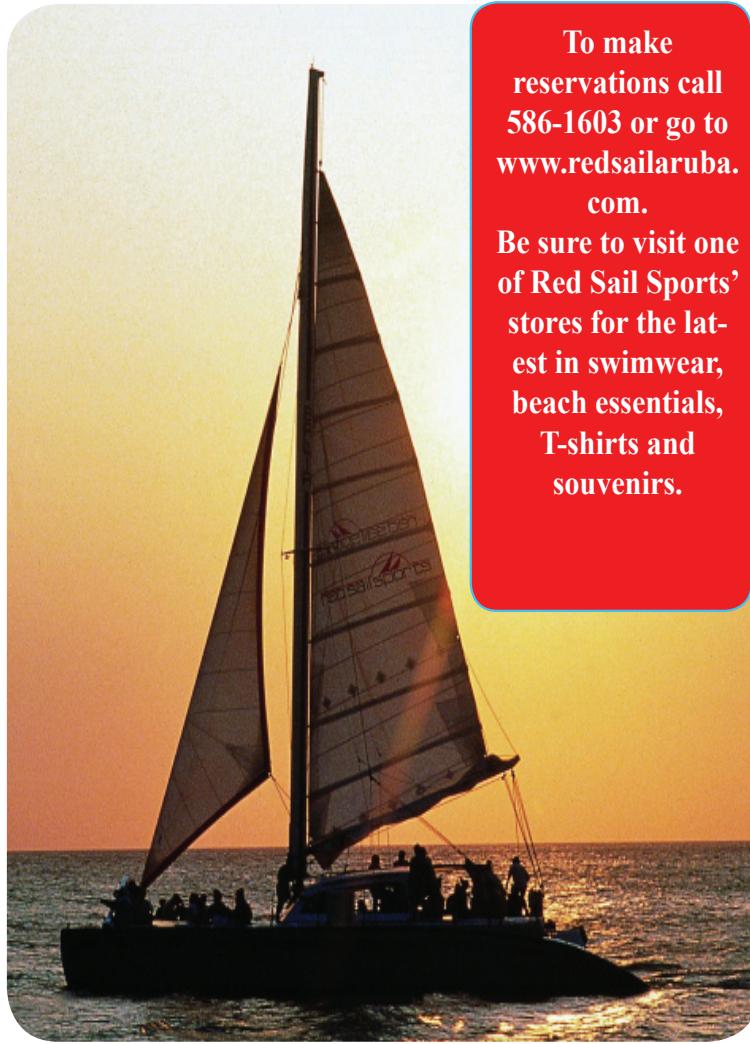
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**PALM BEACH** – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan. Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers up a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, homemade soups, and much more. The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

Restaurant  
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Monday - Sat 6 pm - 11  
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**TASTE OF BELGIUM**

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**PALM BEACH** - Taste of Belgium's Bistro is located in the intimate courtyard of the Paseo Herencia Mall across from the Holiday Inn Resort. It is cozy and casual: one can have a drink with friends, have a quick bite before grabbing a movie or relax and lounge away the afternoon and evening in the balmy breeze underneath the stars. The Bistro's great selection of Belgian beers has drawn many beer lovers to the mall already, but it is its exquisite food, ample portions and great prices that keep folks coming back for more every night of the week.

The Bistro's menu offers everyone's favorites, but with a culinary Belgian twist. This might be an unusual

presentation, an awesome side dish, a stunning combination, a surprising regional dish or a dessert that takes you to heaven and back a few times. Good service and lots of smiles will surely make the Bistro one of your favorite places to go to. Open for coffee, lunch, drinks, dinner and cocktails.

**Early Bird**  
When the rays of the sun start fading and the shadows grow a bit longer, many choose for an exceptionally good option for dinner: the Early Bird Special! The restaurant's sundown, 3-course menu is spectacular and its price can't be beat for \$ 25.00.  
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# IFA tours the antique shop at Rococo Plaza



Tanki Leendert -- Always interested in learning about places on Aruba, members of the International Friends of Aruba enjoyed a tour of the Antique Shop Louis 15th & Museum of Antiquities, on

Tuesday, November 24. Owner Nancy Ninaber-Schmidt treated her guests to an informative tour of the facility, complete with refreshments and a fun quiz about what they had learned.

The Antique Shop is located at Rococo Plaza, Tanki Leendert 158-G, and is open Monday through Friday during regular business hours and on Saturdays in the morning hours. The last Sunday of each



month will find Rococo Plaza open to browsers and bargain hunters, in the morning hours. The place is a treasure trove of items from all over the world, from exquisite pieces of furniture to the tiniest

accessories and home décor pieces. Anyone interested in learning more about the International Friends of Aruba is invited to go to [www.ifaruba.com](http://www.ifaruba.com) for more information. □

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# Central Govt eases income, employment restrictions

*~ In Brooks Tower Accord review ~*

PHILIPSBURG -- The Central Government has relaxed restrictions on income and employment for undocumented immigrants after a recent review of the Brooks Tower Accord (BTA).

Non-nationals living illegally in the Netherlands Antilles no longer need to earn as much

money to qualify for BTA, a legalisation programme that allows undocumented persons to obtain temporary legal residence.

Most still need to earn at least minimum wage – just over US \$700 monthly – for consideration for a temporary residence permit, according to Norman Serphos, liaison

## Customs catches man with drugs during second search at airport

PHILIPSBURG -- Customs officers arrested a man at Princess Juliana International Airport (PJIA) trying to smuggle dissolved cocaine out of St. Maarten Tuesday, a day after they had let him go because he and another man hadn't had any drugs on their arrival.

It was the second time in three days smugglers had tried to fly to Europe via St. Maarten with cocaine in lotion bottles, according to information from the Windward Islands Customs Department.

In custody is a Curaçao-born man C.P.W. (42) who lied to officers at PJIA about his travel plans Monday. Authorities released W. and another man identified only as M. that day when they couldn't find drugs on them.

Officers stopped W. again on Tuesday as he tried to board a KLM flight to Curaçao. They found more than one kilo of cocaine on him.

He and M. had told authorities on Monday that they planned to stay in St. Maarten at least a week before leaving. When officers caught the men buying tickets to Paris, France, minutes later they had stopped them, searched their bags and X-rayed their stomachs on suspicion that they were carrying bolitas.

The officers were forced to release the suspects on Monday because the searches had turned up nothing. "The procedure is [that] we have to let them go [if they are clean]," Customs Head Anthony Doran said.

In the search on Tuesday, Customs officers found W. with 1.5 kilos of cocaine dissolved in four bottles of lotion.

Then they stopped M. at the airport again during his second attempt to buy Air France tickets. They searched and X-rayed him again and found nothing, Doran said. They had to release M. and allow him to fly.

Customs officials in Curaçao stopped a man on Sunday who had just left St. Maarten on an Insel Air flight. That suspect was caught with 1.72 kilos of cocaine in lotion bottles. He originally had tried to fly to the Netherlands, but had been detained by authorities in St. Maarten and sent back.

Doran said authorities hadn't seen smugglers trying to move drugs in bottles of lotion in months. "It's been nearly a year since we confiscated cocaine in liquid form," he said. □

to the Antillean Council of Ministers.

The Central Government decided that immigrants who had arrived here before December 31, 2001 – non-nationals in BTA Category I – didn't need to have "all evidence necessary" to prove their financial situations. Instead, they can show BTA workers that they have at least enough money to stay. Government lifted employment restrictions on Category II immigrants – persons who arrived between 2002 and 2005. The BTA had required Category II applicants to have their employers sign the requests. Officials now include self-

employment for Category II, as long as applicants make enough money and can pay the US \$800 work permit processing fee. "They must meet the criteria of sufficient financial means (at least minimum wage) ... and the [ability to pay the] fee itself (via the bank)," Serphos said in a press statement Tuesday.

The Central Government set the minimum income for single-parent families at \$1,500.

The BTA went into effect three weeks ago in St. Maarten, Curaçao and Bonaire, giving undocumented persons who have lived in the Antilles for years the chance to become

legal residents for one year. Legalisation continues until December 15. After that, undocumented persons have three months to leave before intense controls start.

Antillean Justice Minister Magali Jacoba promised that the government would amend restrictions and criteria to ensure that as many of the estimated tens of thousands of undocumented persons become legal residents.

She urged two of the first 36 persons who received BTA permits here to request the usual residence and work papers at least four months before their BTA permits expire on November 3, 2010. □

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## SVB wants to manage St. Maarten's proposed Health Insurance System

*~ Willemberg says Govt, SVB should talk ~*

PHILIPSBURG--The Windward Islands Social Insurance Bank SVB says it is fully competent to manage the National Health Insurance System (NHIS) for Country St. Maarten and believes the Island Government and the insurance service provider should engage in dialogue about working together.

SVB Head Windward Islands Reginald Willemberg said that while government had indicated that it was not interested in SVB managing the fund, it should at least tap the available knowledge and expertise. "Government should at least talk to SVB to see in what manner the SVB can assist or even provide the services in the new country St. Maarten, not necessarily in the same format that we have right now, because right now SVB is a Central Government entity and we are looking at a new service for Country St. Maarten," he said.

Leader of Government Commissioner William Marlin told reporters last week that no formal decision had been taken on who would manage the NHIS, but said the project would go on bid and organisations or groups would have a chance to bid.

"I believe that if given the chance, SVB will be able to manage the NHIS, not because of emotional reasons, but based on the experience and expertise that we have in-house. We can do it, but we have to be cognisant of the fact that there are certain resources that we don't have at the moment, because we are supported by a head office [based in Curaçao] with certain departments [also based in Curaçao]."

SVB's legal department, account managers and financial departments are not physically located in St. Maarten.

"This does not mean that we cannot get all of these departments in the future, but whether we do it for the new entity or for SVB's new format, we still have to get these departments, and I believe that SVB

is the most able to do it."

He said SVB was preparing a plan to present to government on how SVB could contribute to the NHIS process.

"I don't think it's wise to throw away the wealth of wisdom and knowledge that we have locally in St. Maarten. We should make use of the experience that we have and the infrastructure that has been in place for more than 49 years. We should not just throw it out the window. I believe that we should use the resources that we have and the expertise to help set up the new entity that will be established," Willemberg said.

He also explained that the intention was for sickness insurance to be removed from SVB's mandate and for the insurance service provider to continue managing accident insurance, old age pensions, widows' and orphans' pensions and cessantia payments. Willemberg said that while SVB fully supported its workers in their fight for job security and to secure their accumulated benefits, the insurance service provider was exploring other avenues to offer some sort of job security to its staff.

"We applaud the staff for their efforts to get some answers. Management supports their appeal, because we think it's very important for everyone to have clarity on what will happen to them in the future."

He said SVB was currently "in a difficult position" with the planned introduction of the NHIS.

Marlin had said earlier that government had taken note of the concerns of SVB and Health Cost Bureau BZV workers and would not turn its back on them. The workers were lobbying for written guarantees that their jobs and accumulated benefits will be maintained when the NHIS is introduced. They had also met with several members of the Executive Council and had submitted a petition to government. □

## Marketing firm in Holland about to halt all operations

*~ Still no contract from government ~*

AMSTERDAM--Interreps, the firm representing St. Maarten's Tourism Bureau in the Netherlands, is on the verge of halting all operations because the Executive Council is still to approve the extension of its marketing contract.

Interreps Director Lydia Haveman said she would love to continue, but couldn't do so without a contract. "Formally, we can't represent St. Maarten," she said.

Her comments compound a serious problem for St. Maarten, which is already without representation in Canada, the island's second largest source market, or Brazil. Wholesalers and travel writers have warned on separate occasions recently that the destination is lagging behind in its positioning strategy as it relates to vital markets. Other destinations in the region, they stressed, have surpassed St. Maarten in key markets in terms of aggressive and consistent promotion.

Through the efforts of former Tourism Commissioner Roy Marlin, the Island Territory signed a one-year contract with Interreps on July 1, 2008. That contract ended June 30 and Haveman said she had been trying for more than half a year to get the agreement extended so her company could continue promotional efforts in the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, the so-called Benelux, on behalf of St. Maarten. Commissioner of Tourism Frans Richardson said the situation with the contracts had had his attention since he assumed office. Although he could not go into detail at this time, he alluded to complications with Committee for Financial Supervision CFT rules, but stressed that the issue had his fullest attention and he hoped to have it resolved soon.

St. Maarten Hospitality and Trade Association (SHTA) President Emil Lee also told the SHTA's recent general membership meeting that SHTA believed the island would have a challenging year ahead because of the lack of contractual agreements.

"Our competition will certainly be out in the market competing aggressively for business. Our tourism infrastructure still leaves a lot to be desired. Again, I am not blaming anyone, but the reality is that we are without representation in Canada, and the island sales representatives in Holland and South America are still without contracts that guarantee them payment."

"We are concerned that government liquidity issues may impair the ability of the destination to fund a proper marketing campaign," Lee had told the meeting. It is unrealistic to expect persons to work hard on the island's behalf when the island does not do the same in return, he had added.

When this newspaper contacted Haveman to enquire what had become of the initial marketing and promotional activities and what new developments were taking place, she reported: "We've been in constant contact with the Tourism Bureau in St. Maarten, but so far the extension has not been approved by the Executive Council. We haven't had a response." □

# BUSINESS

## Aruba TODAY

# Stocks rise following drop in jobless claims

By TIM PARADIS  
and IEVA M. AUGSTUMS,  
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK – Stocks climbed Wednesday following a drop in weekly unemployment claims to the lowest level of the year and a rise in new home sales. The market's gain was modest on thin trading volume ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday, which can exacerbate swings in the market.

The government said new claims for unemployment insurance fell by 35,000 last week to 466,000. That's the fewest claims since September last year, and better than the 500,000 that economists had expected.

The drop in claims suggests the job market is healing, but concern remains that the improvement will be temporary as the weak economy continues to push unemployment higher. The jobless rate hit 10.2 percent in October and many analysts believe it will keep rising before starting to improve

next summer.

In other economic reports, new home sales rose 6.2 percent to an annual rate of 430,000. That's above what economists surveyed by Thomson Reuters had expected.

Separately, the government also reported consumer spending rose a brisk 0.7 percent last month, following a 0.6 percent drop in September. It was the best showing since August, when the government's now-defunct Cash for Clunkers programs enticed people to buy cars.

Not all the day's news was upbeat. Orders for expensive manufactured goods dropped 0.6 percent last month, the first drop since August. Economists had expected orders would grow.

Doug Roberts, chief investment strategist at Channel Capital Research in Shrewsbury, N.J., said investors are still worried about the sustainability of a recovery but are afraid of missing more of the market's eight-month rally.

"People may not believe in this market but they're reluctantly being pulled into it with each of these reports," he said.

In early afternoon trading, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 23.06, or 0.2 percent, to 10,456.77.

The broader Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 3.53, or 0.3 percent, to 1,109.18, and the Nasdaq composite index rose 6.15, or 0.3 percent, to 2,175.33.

The dollar fell against most other major currencies, while gold rose to another record. A weakening dollar has bolstered commodities and stocks of energy and materials companies, helping pump up their stocks in the market's eight-month rally.

Bond prices fell as the bulk of the day's economic reports eased worries about the economy. That sent the yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note up to 3.35 percent from 3.31 percent late Tuesday. The yield on the three-month T-bill rose to 0.05



In this Nov. 23, 2009 photo, Specialist Christopher Culhane works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Stocks are narrowly mixed Wednesday, Nov. 25, as reports showing a smaller rise in new claims for jobless benefits and strong consumer spending were offset by an unexpected decline in durable goods orders.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

## Rates on 30-year mortgages sink, match record low

MCLEAN, Va. – Average rates for 30-year fixed mortgages fell this week, matching a record low set last spring and more than a full percentage point below what they were a year ago, Freddie Mac said Wednesday.

Rates for 30-year mortgages averaged 4.78 percent this week, down from 4.83 percent last week and equaling the record low reached the week of April 30.

Freddie Mac has been tracking rates on 30-year fixed mortgages since 1971. Last year at this time, the 30-year fixed rate mortgage averaged 5.97 percent.

Interest rates began dropping last November, when the Federal Reserve began spending \$1.25 trillion to buy up mortgage-backed securities in an effort to lower rates, loosen credit availability and bolster the long-suffering housing market.

Since April, rates have hovered near 5 percent, spurring refinance activity. However, credit standards remain stringent, so the best rates usually are available only to borrowers with solid credit and a 20 percent down payment. Rates for 30-year fixed mortgages are now 0.8

percentage points below this year's peak set in mid-June. Refinancing at the current rate shaves roughly \$100 off monthly payments on a \$200,000 mortgage, said Frank Nothaft, Freddie Mac's chief economist.

Freddie Mac collects mortgage rates on Monday through Wednesday of each week from lenders around the country. Rates often fluctuate significantly, even within a given day, frequently in line with long-term Treasury bonds. The average rate on a 15-year fixed-rate mortgage fell to 4.29 percent, down from 4.32 percent last week, according to Freddie Mac. The 15-year rate hasn't been this low since Freddie Mac started tracking it in 1991.

Rates on five-year, adjustable-rate mortgages averaged 4.18 percent, down from last week's 4.25 percent. Rates on one-year, adjustable-rate mortgages were 4.35 percent for the second consecutive week.

The rates do not include add-on fees known as points. The nationwide fee for loans in Freddie Mac's survey averaged 0.7 point for 30-year and one-year loans. The fee averaged 0.6 point for 15-year and five-year mortgages. □

percent from 0.03 percent. The Chicago Board Options Exchange's Volatility Index, known as the market's fear index, fell to 20.05, its lowest level since August 2008. That's a signal that investors are less worried about big swings in the market.

In corporate news, Tiffany & Co. rose after its third-quarter profit topped expectations and the jeweler raised its full-year profit forecast ahead of the holiday shopping season. Tiffany rose \$1.67, or 4 percent, to \$43.50.

That lifted other luxury retailers. Saks Inc. rose 27 cents, or 4.2 percent, to \$6.68, while Nordstrom Inc. rose 81 cents, or 2.4 percent, to \$34.49. The reports came ahead of the unofficial start of the holiday shopping season on Friday. Investors will be looking for any signals in the coming weeks from retailers

about consumer spending, which is the primary driver of the economy.

Deere and Co. posted a loss for its fiscal fourth quarter but the maker of farm equipment said it would have been profitable without big charges it booked during the latest period. The stock rose \$1.47, or 2.8 percent, to \$53.76.

Light, sweet crude rose \$1.06 to \$77.08 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

More than two stocks rose for every one that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 411.3 million shares compared with 456.5 million shares traded at the same point Monday.

Overseas, Japan's Nikkei stock average rose 0.4 percent. Britain's FTSE 100 rose 0.8 percent, Germany's DAX index rose 0.6 percent, and France's CAC-40 rose 0.7 percent. □



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University students carry large red ribbons on a street during an HIV/AIDS awareness rally ahead of World AIDS day in Shenyang, Liaoning province November 29, 2008.

REUTERS/Stringer

By MARIA CHENG,  
AP Medical Writer

GENEVA — The number of people worldwide infected with the virus that causes AIDS — about 33 million — has remained virtually unchanged for the last two years, United Nations experts

said Tuesday.

Officials say the global epidemic probably peaked in 1996 and that the disease looks stable in most regions, except for Africa. Last year, HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 72 percent of all 2.7 million new

## UN: HIV outbreak peaked in 1996

HIV cases worldwide. Daniel Halperin, an AIDS expert at Harvard University, said it was good news the rate of new infections was dropping and that access to AIDS drugs was helping to cut the death rate. Earlier this year, the U.N. announced there are now 4 million people on lifesaving AIDS drugs worldwide, a 10-fold increase in five years.

In the report by the World Health Organization and UNAIDS, the experts estimate there are now about 33.4 million people worldwide with HIV. In 2007, the figure was about 33.2 million. The numbers are based on a mathematical model and come with a margin of error of several million people.

With the U.N.'s confirmation HIV is now declining in most countries, some experts said the report should change the spending habits of international donors. Globally, HIV causes about 4 percent of all deaths, but gets about 23 cents of every public health dollar. "We shouldn't let this single disease continue to distort overall global funding, especially when bigger killers like pneumonia and diarrhea

in developing countries are far easier and cheaper to treat," said Philip Stevens, of International Policy Network, a London-based think tank. In the report, U.N. officials wrote that "AIDS continues to be a major public health priority" and called for more funds to support their effort. Officials said the drugs have saved nearly 3 million lives.

People with HIV who start the drugs must continue indefinitely, so the cost of treating HIV will continue to rise, even as the epidemic fades. Prices could skyrocket if resistance develops and more expensive regimens are needed.

Whether previous U.N. initiatives are responsible for the epidemic's downturn is uncertain. Some experts said the drop in HIV may simply be a result of the virus burning itself out, rather than the result of any health interventions. Ties Boerma, a WHO statistics expert, said countries whose HIV prevalence declined dramatically, like Zimbabwe, were not always those that got the most AIDS money. The report also noted that where treatment is available,

rates of HIV are either stable or rising.

Elizabeth Pisani, an epidemiologist who once worked for UNAIDS, said when people with HIV don't take their drugs exactly as prescribed, they have periods where they become infectious, giving the virus a chance to spread. Most people without treatment die before infecting many others.

"In theory, treatment may have an important preventative effect, but in practice, it can actually make things worse," Pisani said. "We obviously can't stop treatment, but we need to do a lot more on prevention."

Stevens said the fact that AIDS peaked more than a decade ago suggests it is now time for the global community to prioritize other health problems.

Outside of the worst-affected countries such as South Africa, respiratory infections, heart disease and malaria are bigger killers.

"Against this backdrop, it is unjust that AIDS should commandeer such a disproportionate level of funding," Stevens said. □



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# Vicki Kennedy describes husband's cancer battle

By DON BABWIN,  
Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO — The widow of Sen. Edward M. Kennedy told Oprah Winfrey in an interview broadcast Wednesday that even as her husband knew he was dying of brain cancer he had been "in training" to make sure he had enough strength to attend President Barack Obama's inauguration.

In the most extensive interview since her husband's death in August, Vicki Kennedy said she wouldn't try to run for her husband's former U.S. Senate seat and described how he battled brain cancer — but she would not talk about the last thing he said to her before dying.

"I think I'll just keep that one to myself," she told Winfrey on "The Oprah Winfrey Show." During the hour-long interview was taped Friday, Kennedy was sometimes joined on stage by her two grown children as well as Ted Kennedy Jr. She described her husband's seizure in May 2008, which led to his diagnosis of the brain cancer that ended his life at the age of 77.

"We went from thinking he had lost his life, to thinking that he'd had a stroke, to thinking that he wouldn't speak to thinking that he was OK, to then finding out that he

might have a brain tumor all in the span of about three hours," she said. She also told Winfrey about how her husband kept working on his book after his diagnosis and even was calling colleagues in the Senate to talk about strategy to push through legislation as he was traveling to Duke University Medical Center in Durham, N.C. to undergo brain surgery.

"It was an inspiration, really, to watch how Teddy grappled with such a grave diagnosis and always looked forward with hope," she said.

After watching a clip of her husband's speech at the Democratic National Convention, Kennedy said her husband, despite being told initially that he had just a few months to live, was determined to survive long enough to see Obama sworn in as president. "He was in training to be there in January," she said. "He was exercising every single day to be strong enough to be there," and even calculated how many steps he would have to take that day.

During the interview, Winfrey held Ted Kennedy's memoir "True Compass," which was released shortly after Kennedy's death, and read from it a number of times. As of Tuesday, the book was 12th on the New York

Times Best Sellers list for nonfiction titles. Kennedy also adamantly told Winfrey that she had no intention of ever running for the Senate seat that her husband held for nearly a half century when the host mentioned about "talk" that she might run.

"No, no, not for me," she said. "We had Sen. Kennedy in our household."

The program also included clips from Kennedy's life. There was news coverage of assassinations of Ted Kennedy's older brothers, President John F. Kennedy and Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, along with Kennedy's own run failed run for president and the death of Mary Jo Kopechne, who drowned after Kennedy drove the car in which she was riding into a pond on Chappaquiddick island. There were also scenes



In this photo taken Nov. 20, 2009 and released by Harpo Productions, Inc., talk-show host Oprah Winfrey, right, talks with Vicki Kennedy, wife of the late Sen. Edward Kennedy, in her first television interview since her husband's passing during taping of 'The Oprah Winfrey Show.' The episode will air on Wednesday, Nov. 25.

(AP Photo/Harpo Productions Inc., George Burns)

from Kennedy's funeral service — including perhaps the most poignant moment during which in his eulogy of his father, Ted Kennedy Jr. told of having his leg amputated

when he was 12 and how his father picked him up after he fell on a hill and told him that together they would "climb that hill together, if it takes us all day." □

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In this publicity image released by ABC, Donny Osmond, and his partner Kym Johnson, left, celebrate after they were crowned champions of 'Dancing with the Stars,' on the Season Finale, Tuesday, Nov. 24, 2009 in Los Angeles. (AP Photo, ABC, Adam Larkey)

NEW YORK — An estimated 19.2 million people watched Donny Osmond win "Dancing With the Stars" — the smallest audience for the show's finale since the first season.

This was the ninth edition of the contest, one of television's most popular shows. The Nielsen Co. says ratings have been down all season for the show, an indication that viewers weren't as attached to the contestants as they had in the past.

Osmond said the show has been a highlight in a career of ups and downs. He competed during the show's finale Tuesday against singer Mya and Kelly Osbourne, daughter of rock star Ozzy Osbourne. □

# Catch your own dinner with Driftwood!

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President Barack Obama, right, with daughters, Sasha Obama, 8, Malia Obama, 11, reacts with Walter Pelletier, chairman of the National Turkey Federation, as Malia reaches to pet a turkey, Courage, the day before Thanksgiving, during a ceremony in the North Portico of the White House in Washington Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2009.

Associated Press

## Obama's first pardon: A turkey named 'Courage'

NATASHA T. METZLER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — After 10 months in office, President Barack Obama granted his first pardon Wednesday to "Courage," a 45-pound turkey spared from the Thanksgiving dinner table.

Accompanied by daughters Sasha and Malia, Obama stood under the North Portico of the White House to honor a holiday tradition that dates to 1947 — receiving a bird from the National Turkey Federation.

"I'm told Presidents Eisenhower and Johnson actually ate their turkeys," Obama said. "You can't fault them for that; that's a good-looking bird."

On the Thanksgiving holiday, the last Thursday in November, many Americans have turkey for lunch or dinner.

President George H.W. Bush was the first to officially pardon a turkey, an annual event at the White House.

Obama joked about wanting to forgo the tradition and eat "Courage."

"Thanks to the interventions of Malia and Sasha — because I was planning to eat this sucker — 'Courage' will also be spared this terrible and delicious fate," he said.

Obama said he wished all American service members at home and abroad a happy Thanksgiving, speaking of the "tremendous

honor it is to serve as commander in chief of the finest military in the world."

He also spoke about the first family's plans for the holiday dinner.

"Just like millions of other families across America, we'll take time to give our thanks for many blessings," Obama said. "We'll also remember this is a time when so many members of our American family are hurting."

Obama noted that President Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving a holiday in the midst of the Civil War in the 1860s, "when the future of our very union was most in doubt."

"This is an era of new perils and new hardships," he added. "So on this quintessentially American holiday, as we give thanks for what we've got, let's also give back to those who are less fortunate."

After his remarks, the turkey was lifted to a table and Obama raised his hand over its head to deliver a mock-serious pardon.

"You are hereby pardoned," he said.

Obama said "Courage" will get to spend the rest of his life in "peace and tranquility" at a Disneyland amusement park.

The National Thanksgiving Turkey, Courage, waits to be pardoned by President Obama, in a ceremony in the North Portico of the White House, in Washington, Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2009. □

## Obama expects support for more Afghanistan troops



In this Friday Oct. 23, 2009 file photo U.S. Secretary for Defense Robert Gates, left, shares a word with U.S. Military commander in Afghanistan General Stanley McChrystal, right, and the top allied commander for Europe Admiral James Stavridis, center, during a round table meeting of NATO defense ministers in Bratislava, Slovakia.

Associated Press

ANNE GEARAN

AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama will announce his plan to bolster the war in Afghanistan in a speech Tuesday night, his spokesman said, a surge that U.S. military officials say could top 30,000 troops.

Continued on Page B4



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, gestures as he speaks during a press conference in his Jerusalem office, Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2009.

Associated Press

## Israel OKs 10-month settlement freeze

JOSEF FEDERMAN

Associated Press Writer

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel agreed to a 10-month halt in construction in its West Bank settlements on Wednesday, drawing an immediate rejection from Palestinians because the freeze did not include east Jerusalem.

Shortly before Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's televised statement, his Security Cabinet approved the freeze.

Continued on Page B8

# Americans search for cheaper Thanksgiving trips



By MICHAEL TARM

Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO — Millions of Americans got an early jump on their Thanksgiving travel Wednesday, with many opting to drive or take trains and buses instead of shelling out more money for flights amid a sour economy still hitting

household budgets hard.

At a Greyhound station in Louisville, Ky., 18-year-old Cathy Smith waited patiently to catch a bus to Tennessee. Smith has flown home in the past, but her grandparents — who paid for her bus ticket — ruled that out this year. "It was the price of the ticket,"

she said.

Many Americans are forgoing air travel for Thanksgiving and opting for cheaper alternatives because of economic pressures. Others are staying home completely — partly to avoid traffic and airport lines, partly to save a buck.

Thanksgiving travel plummeted 25 percent between 2007 and 2008, and many of those habits seem to be sticking this year. The number of people traveling is likely to inch up only by about 1.4 percent, according to an AAA prediction based on a survey of 1,300 households. About 38 million domestic travelers are expected to go somewhere this holiday — a far cry from the roughly 58 million who made holiday

journeys in 2005 when the economy was better.

Traveling for Thanksgiving at any cost was too much for Julie Bennink, 26, who works in public relations in Chicago. Unexpected bills meant she couldn't afford paying what would have been at least \$400 for a rental car and gas to drive the three hours to Grand Rapids, Mich., for dinner with her family.

"My mom was not really thrilled with me when I told her," said Bennink, whose plan B was to take a 15-minute city bus ride to a friend's house.

Most people have calculated that travel by car often makes the most financial sense, said Alan Pisarski, a leading transportation analyst. About 33 million people are expected to travel by car this Thanksgiving, according to AAA.

John and Janet Lawson of Elizabethtown, Ky., opted to drive 350 miles to Dearborn Heights, Mich., to make dinner for one of her sisters rather than spend the holiday with her other siblings in Minnesota.

"It affected us as far as the distance we would travel," Janet Lawson said at a service plaza along Interstate 75 in southwest Ohio. "We didn't want to do any flying."

The Lawsons left home at 4 a.m., hoping to beat traffic. Their SUV was loaded with turkey, gravy, stuffing, cranberry sauce, sweet potatoes and pies. "If we get stranded on the side of the road, we are not going to starve," John Lawson said.

Pam Walker and her family of five made the more than seven-hour drive from Muskegon, Mich., to Nashville to visit her son. "It's cheaper and it's also a ride we're familiar with," said Walker, who was meeting her son at a restaurant for breakfast.

Those on the road also were watching their wallets.

"Instead of stopping at restaurants, we prepared and packed food ahead of time, so we could save money," said Sheldi Freeman, who stopped at a service plaza for a bathroom and coffee break on Interstate 64 in New Kent

County, Va., while driving from Columbus, Ohio, to Virginia Beach.

Train ridership also was predicted to get a holiday boost. Amtrak said it expected Wednesday to be its busiest travel day of the year, with ridership as high as 125,000 passengers. On a typical Wednesday, the railroad carries approximately 74,000 passengers.

At New York City's Penn Station, sisters Emily and Katie Jacobs ate breakfast and drank coffee as they waited for their train to Atlantic City, N.J.

Emily Jacobs, 26, said they decided on Amtrak after considering "traffic on the roads, getting out of the city, and then the New Jersey Turnpike ... might as well bypass all that."

The cost of flying was another deterrent, Emily Jacobs said, since "ticket prices for planes were insane" already and the surcharges for holiday airfare were even more discouraging. Airlines had been depending on holiday travelers more than usual because travel has been so weak the rest of the year, said Stifel Nicolaus analyst Hunter Keay. The AAA predicts there will be a 6.7 percent decrease in air travelers this holiday compared with last year.

That doesn't mean fewer sardine-packed planes. Carriers have cut the number of aircraft in service, ensuring full planes. And with extra fees to check baggage on most carriers, many travelers are likely to bring as much as they can on board. So add battles for overhead compartment space to the list of potential headaches.

At Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, Manu Maile was checking to make sure passengers followed American Airlines' limits for carry-on luggage — one bag and one personal item. Maile, who works for Prospect Airport Services, said more people were trying to sneak an extra bag on board this year. She said crowds were smaller and less frenzied than last Thanksgiving. "Last year we had people fighting at the checkpoint," Maile said. □



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## Pro-immigration reform groups growing in influence

**LAURA WIDES-MUNOZ**

AP Hispanic Affairs Writer

MIAMI (AP)—Two fledgling political action committees that support allowing some illegal immigrants to become citizens are raising more money than their immigration-control counterparts, signaling a possible fundraising shift ahead of next year's congressional races.

Immigrants' List and ImmigrationPAC, both established less than four years ago, have raised \$100,000 combined this election cycle. That's a relatively small amount in the influential realm of PACs, or political action committees, but still more than established groups that back enforcement-only policies, who have seen donations slow to a trickle.

"Even a small amount of pro-immigration reform PAC money, pro-immigration muscle, makes it a two-sided debate," said Tamar Jacoby, who heads ImmigrationWorks USA, a federation of mostly small and medium businesses that support a path to citizenship for some illegal immigrants and streamlining the employment visa process. The power of PACS goes far beyond their direct contributions to candidates. They also wield power by bundling smaller donations from individuals nationwide and directing those funds to politicians sympathetic to their causes.

The PACS — formed by immigration lawyers and other immigrant advocates — are among pro-immigrant groups seeing donations on the rise. Large foundations are donating millions to nonprofits that work with immigrants,

although that money can't be used for campaigns.

Allen Brandstater, head of the PAC Americans Against Illegal Immigration, acknowledged the changing mood. His group, which raised \$850,000 during the 2008 election cycle for mostly issue ads and mailers, the most of any of the immigration PACs, is "pretty much dormant right now," he said. Brandstater blamed the lack of support on the weak economy and on President Barack Obama and the Democratic-led Congress, which he believes are more likely to back legalization.

Brandstater also lamented that some donors have grown wary about associating themselves with his organization because of what he said was negative publicity in 2008.

"In the last election, you were called racist if you wanted to protect the sovereignty of our borders," he said.

Miami-based immigration attorney Ira Kurzban co-founded Immigrants' List, the

nation's first major PAC to support legalization and other efforts to help U.S. residents and asylum seekers, in 2006. Kurzban says he looked around and saw nearly half a dozen political fundraising groups dedicated to enforcement-only immigration policies that appeared to have the ears of lawmakers.

Two years later, immigrant advocates in Illinois started ImmigrationPAC, now run by the Raben Group, a New York-based lobbying firm.

So far this election cycle, Immigrants' List and ImmigrationPAC have raised \$81,000, compared to about \$71,000 by three enforcement-only committees, according to Federal Election Commission data compiled by the nonprofit Center for Responsive Politics. That's minuscule compared to the National Rifle Association's PAC, which has \$7.4 million in the same period, or to the financial might on both sides of the health care debate.



Lylvie Massillon of Delray Beach, Fla., second from left, holds a sign asking for temporary protected status (TPS) for Haitian immigrants outside of a fundraiser for Democratic congressional candidates attended by President Barack Obama in Miami Beach, Fla. Monday, Oct. 26, 2009.

Associated Press

Still, Jacoby said she is seeing growing cash support from businesses. And major donors such as the Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation and liberal financier George Soros' Open Society Institute have also allocated more to immigrant advocates and their allies. Maria Teresa Rojas, who manages the Open

Society Institute's immigration portfolio, said her foundation alone has allocated an extra \$15 million to be spent over the next three years "to take advantage of what looks to be a historic opportunity to reform our immigration system." She cited the combination of a Democratic president and Congress. □



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Soldiers from the Able Troop 3-71 Cavalry Squadron fire mortar rounds as practice at the Joint Combat Outpost, Baraki Barak district, Logar province, Afghanistan Wednesday Nov. 25, 2009.

*Associated Press*

**AFGHANISTAN TROOPS**

*Continued from Page B1*

The president promised this week to "finish the job" begun eight years ago, and press secretary Robert Gibbs said Wednesday the announcement would include an exit strategy. But

the surge in troops would be Obama's second since taking office, and liberal Democrats already are lining up against it, in part because of the also-surfing cost — up to \$75 billion a year.

Gibbs said Obama's recent

meetings with military advisers have often focused on how to train Afghanistan's police and army to secure and hold areas taken from the Taliban so that U.S. forces can leave. "We are not going to be there another eight or nine years," he said.

Incompetence and corruption in the Afghan government have aided a rise in the Taliban's strength. The military strategy is expected to include specific dates that deployments could be slowed or stopped if necessary, a senior military official said. The official and others spoke on condition of anonymity because the decision was not final.

Obama will be speaking

to a war-weary American public. Polls show support for the war has dropped significantly since Obama took office, with a majority now saying both that they oppose the war and that it is not worth fighting.

The president and his top military and national security advisers have held 10 meetings to discuss America's future steps in Afghanistan.

The top general in Afghanistan, Stanley McChrystal, has asked the president for about 40,000 troops, arguing that a robust but temporary surge was the best way to end the war. Administration officials said Obama has not made a final decision about the number of troops he would approve. Military officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to discuss the president's plans, said they expected the total to be between 32,000 and 35,000. On Tuesday, Obama predicted the American people will support his strategy once they understand the stakes. "I feel very confident that when the American people hear a clear rationale for what we're doing there and how we intend to achieve our goals, that they will be supportive," he said, speaking at a White House news conference with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

McChrystal has warned that the war effort could fail without a large troop infusion. Although he preferred a higher figure — about 40,000 — McChrystal is expected to testify before Congress next week that this lesser number still gives him enough.

The expected increase would include at least three Army brigades and a single, larger Marine Corps contingent, the officials said. Among others likely to take part in congressional hearings are Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Adm. Mike Mullen and U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry. All were among about 20 officials and advisers participating in the president's final deliberations Monday night — one of the biggest groups gathered for these sessions. The administration plan will have a tough sell among some congressional Democrats, including Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin, a Democrat who has questioned the value of adding forces and pointed to the war's rising cost.

The Afghan war bill hit

\$43 billion annually this summer, with the addition of 21,000 forces Obama has already added to the fight this year. □

*The Promenade*

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# Ex-CNN host Lou Dobbs weighs Senate run

ANGELA DELLI SANTI

Associated Press Writer

HILLSIDE, New Jersey (AP)

— Former CNN host Lou Dobbs is seriously considering running for U.S. Senate in New Jersey in 2012 as a stepping stone to a possible White House bid — a congressional matchup that would pit one of illegal immigration's biggest critics against a champion for immigrant rights.

Dobbs spokesman Robert Dilenschneider told The Associated Press Wednesday that Dobbs may challenge Sen. Robert Menendez, a Democrat, but is considering other offers he's received since his abrupt exit from CNN on Nov. 11 after 29 years on the news network.

"A logical step for Lou, should he choose to go into public life, is to run for the next Senate seat in New Jersey, or to accept some kind of appointed position, nationally or in New Jersey," Dilenschneider said. A Dobbs candidacy in 2012 would set up a pitched battle over immigration against Menendez, the Senate's only Hispanic member.

Dobbs, who owns a farm in rural northwestern New Jersey, flirted briefly this year with a run for governor. He later ripped Republican

nominee Chris Christie, a former federal prosecutor, over immigration enforcement and gave the independent candidate air time on CNN. His attacks on Christie could complicate his entry into Republican politics, since Christie won. Dobbs was once a Republican but is now an independent. He did not return requests for comment Wednesday. Dilenschneider said that Dobbs was in Florida and that no decision on his future was expected for at least two weeks.

Monday, Dobbs said on former Sen. Fred Thompson's radio program that he had been urged to run for president and would talk to some people about it. On Wednesday, Dilenschneider backed off that idea, telling The New York Times a presidential run was a "long way off."

The spokesman said there would have to be an "intermediary step," such as the seat held by Menendez. Menendez downplayed any concern about the possible challenge.

"I'm concentrated on jobs, not Dobbs," Menendez said after visiting a food bank in Hillside on Wednesday.

National Republican Senatorial Committee spokesman Brian

Walsh also downplayed a potential Dobbs candidacy, saying, "2012 is not on our radar screen right now. There are 36 Senate seats up in 2010, and that is where the NRSC's sole focus is right now."

Dobbs, 64, was a CNN original who was one of the TV business' leading financial journalists before taking on other topics and increasingly offering his own opinion. He caused controversy when he pressed President Barack Obama to prove he was born in the United States even after his own network's reporting debunked the question. □



In this Monday, Nov. 16, 2009 file photo, Lou Dobbs, left, speaks with Bill O'Reilly during taping a segment for Fox News channel's "The O'Reilly Factor," in New York. Former CNN host Lou Dobbs is seriously considering running for U.S. Senate in New Jersey in 2012 as "an intermediary step" that could lead to a run for the White House.

Associated Press



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# Court convicts ex-general in Colombia massacre



Soldiers are seen after fighting rebels in Corinto in southern Colombia, Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2009. At least nine soldiers were killed and four wounded when they came under mortar attack by about 100 rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, according to Col. Luis Danilo Murcia. No information was given regarding wounded or dead rebels.

**LIBARDO CARDONA**  
Associated Press Writer

BOGOTA (AP) — A Colombian court has convicted a retired army general of murder and sentenced him to 40 years in prison for his role

in a notorious 1997 massacre by far-right militias. The sentence of ex-Gen. Jaime Humberto Uscategui is the most severe imposed on a senior Colombian officer in a case of collusion with right-

wing death squads.

A paramilitary force murdered at least 49 suspected guerrilla sympathizers in the village of Mapiripan from July 15-20, 1997. At the time, Uscategui was a brigade commander in charge of a garrison where a pair of chartered planes full of far-right gunmen landed and were dispatched to oversee the mass killings.

During the five-day massacre, the town's judge, Ivan Cortes, made repeated telephone calls for help to Uscategui subordinates but said they ignored his pleas to send troops to halt the massacre. The killings — bodies were hacked up and many were thrown in a river — marked the bloody arrival of right-wing death squads in Colombia's eastern plains, where they would go on to kill hundreds of suspected leftist rebel sympathizers.

Human rights groups have long accused Colombia's military of aiding and abetting right-wing death squads, citing the Mapiripan massacre as a clear case of close cooperation between the army and landowner-backed militias operating outside the law.

Uscategui "did not make even the most minimal effort to try to confirm the extraordinary deeds" reported by Cortes, the three-judge panel of the Bogota Superior Tribunal said in its 90-page ruling, which was issued Monday but not made public until Wednesday. The court found Uscategui guilty of murder, kidnapping and falsifying public documents.

The ex-general, reached Wednesday by The Associated Press, insisted he was innocent and his lawyer said he would appeal the verdict to Colombia's Supreme Court.

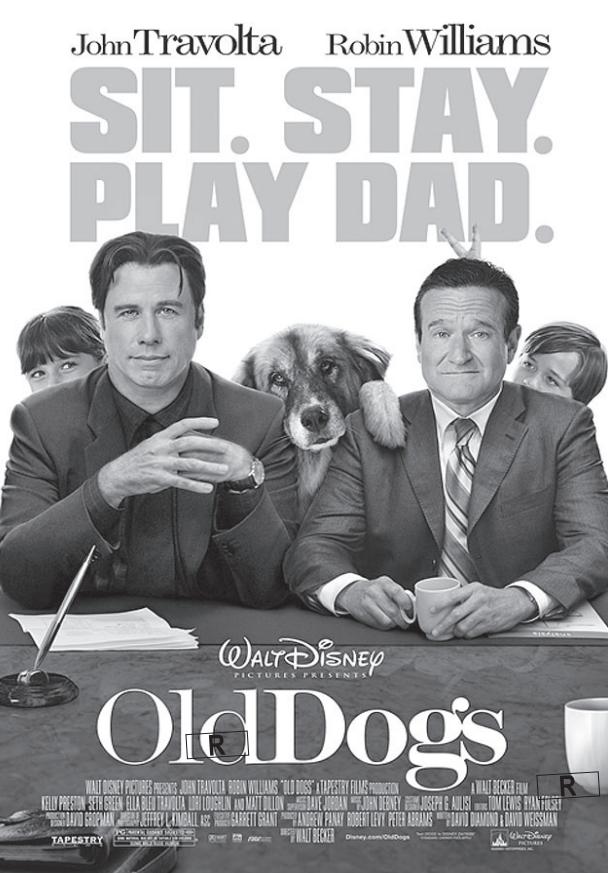
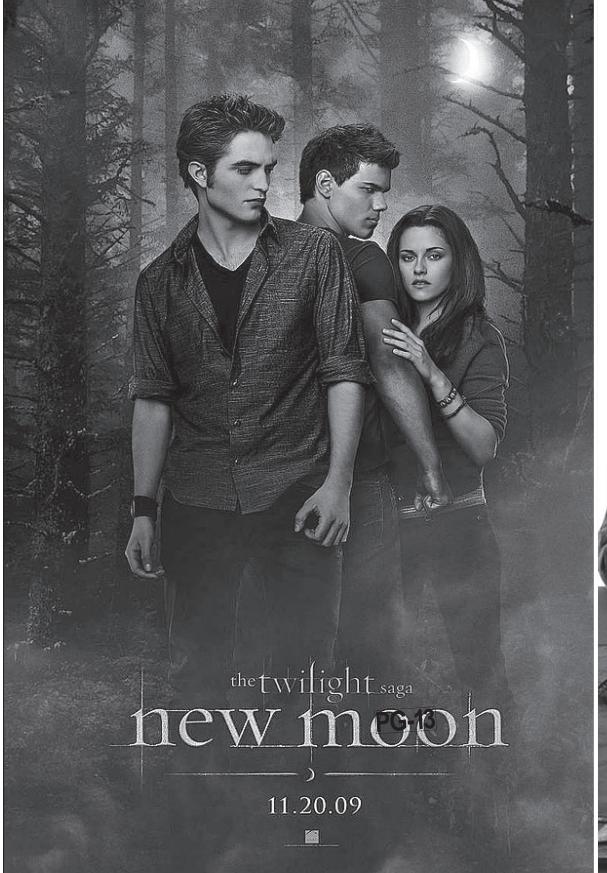
"I have the tranquility of innocence and I also have the tranquility of proof," the 61-year-old Uscategui said. Lawyer Edgar Saavedra said his client would turn himself in as soon as he received the arrest order.

Another former army general, Rito Alejo del Rio, is currently in jail pending trial in civilian court on charges of murder for killings allegedly committed by right-wing death squads that prosecutors say operated hand-in-glove with his forces during the mid-1990s in the turbulent Uraba region on the Caribbean coast. According to prosecutors, about 120 paramilitaries responsible for the Mapiripan massacre, members of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, arrived in two chartered planes at the San Jose del Guaviare airport, which was controlled by Uscategui's command. □

*Associated Press*



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## SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF NOVEMBER 26 - DECEMBER 2

\*matinee: saturday & sunday | late show: friday and saturday

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<input type="checkbox"/> PG	OLD DOGS	daily: 4:15 matinee: 12:15	6:15 2:15	8:15 late show:	10:15 12:15	<b>NEW</b>
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG-13	THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	daily: 5:45 matinee: 3:00	8:45 late show:	23:45	<b>NEW</b>
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<input type="checkbox"/> R	PRECIOUS	daily: 6:15 matinee: 3:45	8:45 late show:	11:15
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<input type="checkbox"/> R	NEX DAY AIR	daily: 7:45 matinee:	10:00 late show:	12:00
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG	THIS IS IT:MICHAEL JACKSON	daily: 6:00 matinee: 3:30	8:30 late show:	11:00
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG	TIM BURTON'S NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS	daily: 4:00 matinee: 2:00	6:00 late show:	
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<input type="checkbox"/> G	SINTERKLAAS EN DE VERDWENEN PAKJESBOOT	daily: 4:30 matinee: 2:15	6:45 late show:	
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<input type="checkbox"/> R	THE STEPFATHER	daily: 9:00 matinee:	late show:	11:30
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### AT PASEO HERENCIA

<input type="checkbox"/> PG-13	THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	daily: 5:30 matinee: 2:45	8:30 late show:	11:30	<b>NEW</b>
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG-13	2012	daily: 4:30 matinee: 1:00	8:00 late show:	11:15
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG	ASTRO BOY	daily: 4:30 matinee: 2:15	late show:	
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<input type="checkbox"/> R	LAW ABIDING CITIZEN	daily: 9:15 matinee:	late show:	12:00
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG	THIS IS IT:MICHAEL JACKSON	daily: 5:45 matinee: 3:15	8:15 late show:	11:00
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG-13	COPLES RETREAT	daily: 7:15 matinee:	9:45 late show:	12:15
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG-13	WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE	daily: 5:00 matinee: 2:45	late show:	
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<input type="checkbox"/> R	PARANORMAL ACTIVITY	daily: 6:45 matinee:	9:00 late show:	11:15
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<input type="checkbox"/> PG	A CHRISTMAS CAROL 3D	daily: 4:45 matinee: 2:30	7:00 late show:	
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# IAEA chief: Iran must accept nuclear proposal

GEORGE JAHN

Associated Press Writer

VIENNA (AP) — The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency urged Iran on Wednesday to endorse a plan that would strip it of most of its enriched uranium, saying Tehran could not defuse fears about its nuclear program with proposals that included keeping the material.

IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei's comments were his firmest public rejection to date of Iranian attempts to modify a proposal that would involve shipping out around 70 percent of its enriched stockpile and returning it in the form of fuel rods for its Tehran research reactor.

While Iran has offered several counterproposals — buying the rods from abroad or exchanging its enriched uranium in small batches — all have in common Tehran's rejection of exporting most of its enriched uranium.

Iran now has enough enriched uranium for up to two nuclear weapons. If stripped of 70 percent of that material, its ability to make such arms would be delayed for at least a year.

Tehran insists it wants to enrich only to power an envisaged nuclear reactor network. But fears that it could instead turn to making fissile highly enriched uranium for warheads have resulted in U.N. Security Council demands that it freeze enrichment — and three sets of U.N. sanctions, shrugged off by Tehran.

"You need the material (out) from Iran to defuse the crisis and open the space for negotiations," ElBaradei told reporters. "Keeping the material in Iran will not lead to that."

His comments dovetailed with the view of six powers endorsing the plan — the U.S., Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany.

Those same nations planned to mount a new challenge to Tehran this week in the form of a resolution to a 35-nation IAEA board meeting criticizing it for ignoring U.N. Security Council and IAEA board demands and continuing to build its enrichment program — sometimes clandestinely.

Two diplomats who demanded anonymity because their information was confidential said that by Wednesday, the

eve of the board's opening session, close to two-thirds of board members had expressed support for the resolution in private meetings.

Impatience with Iran has been fueled by Tehran's September revelation that it had secretly been building a new enrichment facility. In a possible pre-emptive move, Iran notified the IAEA in a confidential letter only days before the leaders of the U.S., Britain and France went public with the clandestine project.

Iran says it did not violate IAEA statutes by waiting with its notification. But ElBaradei has said Tehran was "outside the law" in not telling his agency about the facility much earlier. On Wednesday, he said that Iran's secrecy on the facility reduced "overall confidence" that Tehran is telling the truth when it asserts it is not interested in nuclear arms. A perusal of IAEA records shows that Tehran's chief envoy to the IAEA, Ali Asghar Soltanieh, told the agency's board last year that his country "has repeatedly declared that there is no undeclared nuclear material and activity in Iran" — at the



**Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), left, and Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle of Germany during a news conference after their meeting in Vienna's International Center, Austria, on Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2009.**

Associated Press

time when construction of the secret nuclear facility was in full force.

A copy of the six-power resolution prepared for the closed meeting and obtained by The Associated Press noted that Iran's delay in reporting the new facility "does not contribute to the building of confidence" in Tehran's nuclear aims.

The facility "gives rise to questions about whether there are any other nuclear facilities under construction in Iran which have not been declared to the agency," the document says.

The resolution is significant because it groups Russia and China with the four Western powers in unified criticism of Iran's nuclear program. □

Russia and China have acted as a drag on Western calls for tougher action against Iran.

While the board passed an IAEA resolution critical of Iran in 2006 with the support of all six world powers, subsequent attempts by the West to get backing from all 35 board nations foundered on resistance from Russia and China. Those two nations have also resisted U.S. and European calls for tougher U.N. sanctions against Iran for refusing to freeze its enrichment program.

Such unified action in Vienna could signal that both Russia and China may be more amenable to a fourth set of Security Council sanctions on Iran than they have been in past years. □

**SETTLEMENT FREEZE****Continued from Page B1**

Officials in his office said the vote of senior ministers and top security officials was 11-1 in favor.

Netanyahu said the "far-

reaching and painful step" was designed to "encourage resumption of peace talks with our Palestinian neighbors."

The Obama administration welcomed Israel's decision, saying it was a step toward

restarting Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton issued a statement saying the Israeli decision was a helpful move toward resolving the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict. The administration's special envoy for Mideast peace, former Sen. George Mitchell, also welcomed the move but said it fell short of a full settlement freeze.

"But it is more than any Israeli government has done before and can help movement toward agreement between the parties," he said, adding that he planned to return to the Mideast "in the near future" to resume his efforts to win agreement from the Israelis and Palestinians to return to the negotiating table.

Palestinians already rejected the move before the announcement because the freeze does not include construction in Jewish neighborhoods in East Jerusalem, which the Palestinians want as the capital of their future state. Israel captured east Jerusalem from Jordan in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and annexed it soon after. The sector was entirely Palestinian at the time, but the construction of settlements has since attracted 180,000 Jewish residents. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has demanded a total halt to settlement construction before peace talks can resume. On Wednesday, chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said there was nothing new in Netanyahu's announcement, pointing to the 3,000 new housing units under construction in the West Bank. "This is not a moratorium. Unfortunately, we hoped he would commit to a real settlement freeze so we can resume negotiations and he had a choice between settlements and peace and he chose settlements."

The freeze announced by the Israeli leader applies only to new construction, meaning housing already underway will continue. Also, Netanyahu said, only new homes are included.

"We will not halt existing construction and we will continue to build synagogues, schools, kindergartens and public buildings essential for normal life" in the settlements, he said.

The U.S. stance appeared to be the key to the issue. Palestinians charge that the Obama administration has been vacillating over the settlement construction issue, first demanding a total halt, then appearing to side with Israel in agreeing to limited building. □

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# Taliban leader rules out talks with President Karzai

**ELENA BECATOROS**

**Associated Press Writer**

KABUL(AP)—The Taliban's reclusive leader ruled out talks with President Hamid Karzai and called on Afghans on Wednesday to break off relations with his "stooge" administration.

Mullah Omar's message, issued ahead of the Muslim Eid holiday this weekend, comes less than a week before President Barack Obama is expected to announce an increase of thousands of troops for Afghanistan. The White House has said Obama is focusing on how the United States eventually will withdraw from Afghanistan, even as he plans to send more forces.

In a statement, Omar insisted foreign troops were losing the war.

His message, issued Wednesday ahead of the Muslim Eid holiday, came a week after Karzai reached out to the Taliban during his inauguration speech, saying it was important to include in the government former Taliban who were ready to renounce terrorism.

The hardline militia has long refused to negotiate with the Karzai government or join what it considers a puppet administration.

"Ground realities in our beloved country indicate that the invaders are about to escape," Omar said in the message posted on a Web site used by the Taliban and e-mailed to journalists from an address often used to send out his statements.

Omar led the Taliban regime that was toppled by the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, and has not been seen since. Afghan officials claim he is in hiding in Pakistan.

As the Taliban insurgency gathers strength, U.S. military officials expect Obama to authorize an infusion of approximately 32,000 to 35,000 troops to begin in February or March, which would be the largest expansion since the beginning of the war

in 2001. Obama is to make a public address on his Afghan strategy Tuesday night.

NATO countries are also preparing to send more soldiers, with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown saying 10 NATO nations are ready to offer about 5,000 more troops. Britain, which has 9,000 troops in Afghanistan, the second-largest contingent after the United States, has not named the countries it claims will provide the extra troops. As part of efforts to bolster Afghanistan's own security forces, the Interior Ministry announced Wednesday a salary hike for police to help boost recruitment and retention and curb rampant corruption in the force that suffers a higher death rate than the nation's army.

Bolstering Afghanistan's police force, which is underpaid and under-equipped, is seen as crucial to improving security and eventually allowing foreign troops to go home.

Interior Minister Mohammad

Hanif Atmar said monthly salaries for police working in high-risk areas will increase from \$180 to \$240, while those of police in lower risk areas will increase from \$120 to \$210.

Chief spokesman for the NATO-led force in Afghanistan acknowledged the Taliban had gained momentum in their insurgency. "We need to neutralize locally some of those initiatives to slow them down," Canadian Brig. Gen. Eric Tremblay said. But he also said the militants were aware of progress made in the country with international support, so were trying to undermine the government.

"At the end, President Karzai has been quite clear that reconciliation and reintegration is on the table," Tremblay said.

In his message, the Taliban leader urged Afghanistan to eschew the Karzai government.

"I hope you will continue your legitimate jihad (holy war) and struggle in the way of realizing

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Photo by Diane Keijzer



Former Taliban fighters gather at a police station after surrendering to US and Italian soldiers just two days after President Hamid Karzai asked his fellow countrymen to embrace the government and lay down their arms in western Herat, Afghanistan, Saturday, Nov. 21, 2009. Karzai on Thursday in his inaugural speech said he would welcome and help anyone who agreed to stop fighting and return to their homes.

**Associated Press**

your Islamic aspirations ... and break off all relations with the stooge Kabul administration," Omar said.

Omar said there would be no negotiations that would prolong or legitimize the presence of foreign forces in the country.

"Those who have occupied our country and taken our people as hostage, want to use the stratagem of negotiation like they used the drama of elections for some time in order to achieve their colonialist objectives," he

said. "However, the people of Afghanistan will not agree to negotiation which prolongs and legitimizes the invaders' military presence."

The Taliban leader lambasted U.S.-backed efforts to create militias that would fight the militants — a plan that has been compared to the U.S.-fostered Awakening Councils in Iraq, which have often been credited with reducing violence there, and similar to neighboring Pakistan's tribal armies which also have been touted as a success. □

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# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY

## NBA Roundup

### Wizards edge 76ers 108-107 after owner's death

WASHINGTON (AP) — Antawn Jamison had 32 points and 14 rebounds to lead Washington past the Philadelphia 76ers 108-107 on Tuesday, hours after the death of Wizards owner Abe Pollin.

Nick Young added 20 points for the Wizards, despite playing without Caron Butler, who sat out with a sore right ankle.

Louis Williams' layup pulled Philadelphia to 108-107 with 40 seconds remaining. After Gilbert Arenas committed a turnover with 28 seconds left, Williams missed a potential game-winning 3-pointer as the final buzzer sounded.

Pollin's death was announced by his company, Washington Sports & Entertainment. He was 85.

At Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant



Washington Wizards forward Antawn Jamison (4) goes to the basket against Philadelphia 76ers forward Rodney Carney (25) during the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Nov. 24, 2009, in Washington. The Wizards won 108-107.

Associated Press

scored 34 points, and Pau Gasol added 11 points and 16 rebounds as Los Angeles exploited a major size advantage in beating New York for its fourth straight victory.

Ron Artest scored 17 points for the Lakers, who took control of their eighth win in 10 meetings by scoring 17 consecutive points in the third quarter while holding the Knicks scoreless for nearly 7 1/2 minutes.

Andrew Bynum added 17 points and eight rebounds on an injured right ankle, although he barely needed to jump while helping Los Angeles to a 60-36 rebounding advantage over New York's undersized front line.

Nate Robinson and Wilson Chandler scored 15 points apiece for the Knicks.

#### Raptors 123, Pacers, 112

At Toronto, Chris Bosh had 16 points and 12 rebounds, and Jose Calderon scored

a season-high 21 points as Toronto handed Indiana its fourth straight loss.

Jarrett Jack scored 18 against his former team, and Andrea Bargnani and Hedo Turkoglu each had 14 points for the Raptors, who won for just the second time in six games.

Indiana's Danny Granger recovered from a poor first

half to finish with a season-high 36 points, including seven 3-pointers, and nine rebounds. Ex-Raptor T.J. Ford scored 16.

At Denver, Carmelo Anthony

scored 27 points and Nene

added 17 as Denver dealt

New Jersey its 14th straight

loss to start the season.

**In other NBA games it was, Toronto 123, Indiana 112; Washington 108, Philadelphia 107; Golden State 111, Dallas 103; Oklahoma City 104, Utah 94; Denver 101, New Jersey 87; and L.A. Lakers 100, New York 90.** □



This is a 2009 file photo showing Andruw Jones in a Texas Rangers uniform.

Associated Press

### Andruw Jones agrees to deal with White Sox

CHICAGO — Andruw Jones agreed Wednesday to a \$500,000, one-year contract with the Chicago White Sox. Jones hit .214 with 17 homers and 43 RBIs in 82 games with Texas this year while making 53 starts as the designated hitter, 12 in left field, five in right field and four at first base.

A five-time All-Star who has slumped in recent years, Jones was released by the Los Angeles Dodgers in January and signed with the Rangers the following month.

He agreed to a \$36.2 million, two-year contract with Los Angeles in December 2007. Now 32, he can make an additional \$1 million in performance bonuses under his agreement with the White Sox.

"This is an opportunity to add a power bat to the roster while improving our outfield depth," White Sox general manager Kenny Williams said. "With the addition of Andruw, Mark Kotsay and Omar Vizquel, we feel our bench is taking shape to be a strong asset heading into the 2010 season."

Vizquel, a 42-year-old infielder, agreed Monday to a one-year deal. □



Montreal Canadiens' Josh Gorges, left, Mike Cammalleri, center, and Andrei Kostitsyn, celebrate a goal against the Columbus Blue Jackets by teammate Marc-Andre Bergeron, not seen, during the second period of an NHL hockey game in Montreal, Tuesday, Nov. 24, 2009.

Associated Press

## NHL Roundup

### Bergeron's 2 goals lead Canadiens over Jackets

MONTREAL (AP) — Marc-Andre Bergeron scored his second goal of the game 4:46 into the third period to lead the Montreal Canadiens to a 5-3 win over the Columbus Blue Jackets in the NHL on Tuesday.

Bergeron tied the game at 2-2 with his fourth goal midway through the second period. He scored his second goal of the game — Montreal's second in a span of 2:28 early in the third — to give the Canadiens the lead for good.

Carey Price stopped 33 shots and Mike Cammalleri and Glen Metropolit also scored for Montreal, which improved to 3-0-1 in its last four games, including a 3-2 shootout loss to Detroit on Saturday.

Antoine Vermette scored twice and Anton Stralman and Rick Nash also had two points for Columbus, which has lost three straight to fall to 1-2-1 on its season-high five-game trip. □

NFL Preview

# Giants know exactly what Broncos are going through

NEW YORK (AP) — Having just escaped their own month of misery, the New York Giants understand the seething frustration and loss of poise among the Denver Broncos. The Broncos have lost four in a row and blown their AFC West division lead. The Giants snapped their own four-game slump, which cost them the NFC East lead, by beating Atlanta in overtime last Sunday.

The teams meet on Thursday when the Broncos host their first Thanksgiving Day game since 1963.

Also playing on the national holiday are Detroit vs. Green Bay, and Dallas vs. Oakland. Denver has been abuzz this week about the head coach's cockiness and the ugly sideline spat between running back Knowshon Moreno and wide receiver Brandon Marshall last weekend, and Tuesday's players-only meeting.

"It's an emotional sport, we have a lot of emotional players," coach Josh McDaniels said. "I show a lot of emotion sometimes and I think we've just got to understand what's good and what's not good in terms of showing that and letting that out."

He declined again to discuss his own exchange of pre-game trash talk on Sunday with some San Diego Chargers linebackers. It backfired, as the Chargers won 32-3.

Lately, the Broncos have been talking a good game but playing bad ones. Their offense has been stuck in low gear, their defense is springing leaks, especially against the run, and their special teams are dreadful.

Sounds a lot like the Giants before they snapped out of their funk.

Defensive end Osi Umenyiora said New York's first win in 42 days felt like a brick wall was lifted off their backs.

"We were getting killed around here," he said. "Coming to work wasn't as much fun as it used to be when you were winning. Nobody likes to lose. We are accustomed to winning as of late. It was very, very important and we are happy to get that done."

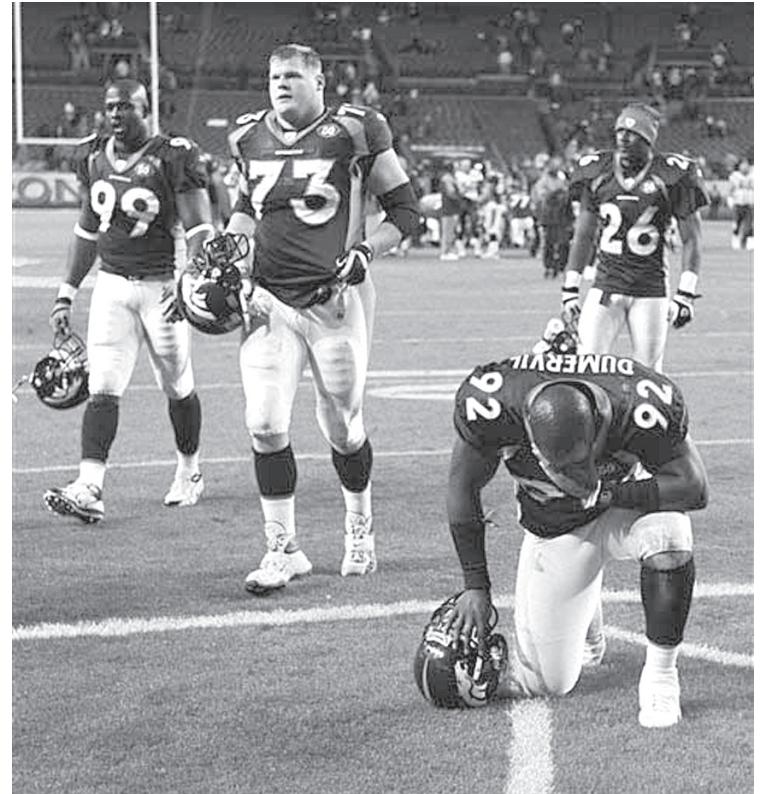
The Green Bay Packers are hoping to bolster their playoff chances with a win at Detroit, where recent history suggests the Lions will be accommodating hosts. Detroit has lost five straight games on the holiday by an average of 23.4 points.

The Lions, though, are feeling good after rallying from a 21-point deficit to beat Cleveland last Sunday for the team's biggest comeback victory since 1957.

"Our locker room is on a high right now," Detroit center Dominic Raiola said. "We're motivated to keep it that way after we were embarrassed at Green Bay (26-0 last month). We have something to prove to the Packers."

Detroit's chances to win — or at least be entertaining — will be directly tied to the health of quarterback Matthew Stafford (shoulder) and receiver Calvin Johnson (hand/knee). The last time both didn't play for the Lions was the Packers whitewash.

Under new starting quarterback Bruce Gradkowski, the Oakland Raiders upset division-leading Cincinnati last Sunday, and they have a chance to knock off another division leader as the Dallas Cowboys are vulnerable, too. The Cowboys have been shut out over the first three quarters in their last two games, a loss at Green Bay and a 7-6 win at home over Washington. Quarterback Tony Romo



Denver Broncos' Elvis Dumervil (92) kneels on the ground after the Broncos lost to the San Diego Chargers in their NFL football game, Sunday, Nov. 22, 2009, in Denver. The Chargers defeated the Broncos 32-3.

Associated Press

was kneed in the back by Washington and is still sore. He also might be without his

favorite target, tight end Jason Witten, questionable with a sprained left foot. □

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# Co-chairmen of NFL concussion panel resign



In this Nov. 9, 2009, file photo, NFL commissioner Roger Goodell looks on during an NFL football game between the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Denver Broncos at Invesco Field at Mile High in Denver. Goodell sent a wide-ranging memo about concussions to NFL teams on Tuesday, Nov. 24, 2009, saying the co-chairmen of the league's committee on brain injuries have resigned and that he is examining potential rule changes "to reduce head impacts." A copy of the memo was obtained by The Associated Press.

*Associated Press***HOWARD FENDRICH**

AP Sports Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — NFL commissioner Roger Goodell sent a wide-ranging memo about concussions to teams on Tuesday, saying the co-chairmen of the league's committee on brain injuries have resigned and he is examining potential rule changes "to reduce head impacts."

Goodell wrote that Dr. Ira Casson and Dr. David Viano, who have led the league committee on concussions since 2007, "have graciously offered to resign from those positions and to continue to assist the committee in its important work. We have accepted those resignations and are currently identifying their replacements."

Goodell said he wants to add new members "who will bring to the committee independent sources of expertise and experience in the field of head injuries." Casson has come under attack recently from the NFL Players Association and members of Congress for criticizing independent and league-sponsored studies linking NFL careers with heightened risk for dementia and cognitive decline.

A message was left for Casson at his office. The NFLPA did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Goodell also said he met on Monday with competition committee co-chair Rich McKay to review specific types of plays with an eye to evaluating possible rules changes "to reduce head impacts and related injuries in a game setting."

Among the other points addressed in the memo, which was addressed to chief executives, club presidents, general managers, head coaches, team physicians and head athletic trainers:

—Goodell wrote the NFL will "continue to invest in research designed to improve equipment safety, and we will urge players to make informed choices regarding the use of the most technologically advanced helmets."

—He noted that former NFL coach and TV analyst John Madden is leading a panel of coaches looking into reducing concussion risk outside of games. Among the possibilities under discussion: Reducing offseason work, limiting helmet use and contact in practice, mini-camps and training camps.

—The league will hold a conference on concussions in Washington in June; team medical personnel "will be required to attend."

"Our game today is played with the understanding that medical decisions must always take priority over competitive interests. As a result, our sport has become safer for those who play it," Goodell wrote. "However, and particularly when player health and safety is

involved, we always strive to do better."

Goodell publicly has been increasing his focus on concussions as the issue has drawn more attention this season, including at a congressional hearing in October.

Casson did not appear in Washington that day, and some lawmakers complained when he did not testify. During the hearing, Congresswoman Linda Sanchez played a clip of a TV interview in which Casson denied evidence of a link between multiple head injuries in NFL players with brain disorders. Sanchez said that reminded her of tobacco companies denying a link between smoking and disease.

During interviews with 160 NFL players conducted by The Associated Press from Nov. 2-15, 30 replied they have hidden or played down the effects of a concussion.

Half said they've had at least one concussion playing American football.

Last Sunday, the two starting quarterbacks from last season's Super Bowl left their teams' games after taking blows to the head: Ben Roethlisberger of the Pittsburgh Steelers and Kurt Warner of the Arizona Cardinals. □

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Tipline di Polis	11141
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BGD San Nicolas	584-1606
Valero Security	584-1720

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Informacion	118
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# Venezuela: Chávez acusa a Peres de amenazarlo

CARACAS (AP) - El presidente Hugo Chávez afirmó el miércoles que tomó como una "amenaza" las críticas que realizó contra Venezuela el mandatario israelí Shimon Peres y advirtió que "actuaremos en consecuencia" ante esas declaraciones.

Chávez dijo, tras recibir en el palacio presidencial a su par iraní Mahmud Ahmadinejad, que los comentarios que realizó la semana pasada Peres contra los gobernantes de Irán y Venezuela representan una "amenaza".

"Lo que dijo el presidente de Israel lo tomamos así, como una amenaza, y actuaremos en consecuencia", declaró Chávez a la prensa sin dar mayores detalles. "Sabemos el Estado de Israel lo que significa, un brazo asesino del imperio yanqui; te acusan a ti de guerrerista y ellos son los agresores".

El mandatario hizo la declaración en alusión a unos comentarios que realizó la semana pasada Peres en Buenos Aires donde señaló que Chávez y Ahmadinejad,

"están destinados a caer, no porque ninguno de nosotros vaya a matarlos, sino porque sus propios pueblos se están cansando de ellos y no tomará mucho tiempo para que desaparezcan".

Venezuela rompió relaciones con Israel a inicios de año en protesta por las acciones militares israelitas en la Franja de Gaza.

"No podrán con nosotros. Triunfará la paz, triunfará la buena fe", dijo Chávez al recibir con una parada militar a Ahmadinejad, a quien llamó "hermano" y "gladiador de las luchas antiimperialistas".

Asimismo, el gobernante alabó la gira que realizó Ahmadinejad por Brasil y Bolivia, países que aseguró que dejaron de ser "colonia yanqui". "Solo un continente libre como Sudamérica puede ahora recibirte", acotó.

Chávez indicó que en la víspera realizó un breve viaje a Cuba donde se reunió con Fidel y Raúl Castro para revisar distintos temas. Al agradecer la bienvenida, Ahmadinejad dijo que

Venezuela e Irán se encuentran en la misma "trinchera", y que están "resistiendo ante las arrogancias del imperio mundial".

Sostuvo que Chávez está cumpliendo un "papel admirable" al llevar adelante una revolución en Venezuela, y al ayudar al "despertar" de los pueblos latinoamericanos. "Vamos a estar juntos hasta el final", dijo el gobernante persa a través de un traductor. Ahmadinejad inició el miércoles su visita a Venezuela en medio de protestas de opositores y universitarios que consideraron al gobernante extranjero como "violador de derechos humanos".

Al grito "no lo queremos, que se vaya", y entre pancartas que decían "millones de judíos muertos te dicen fuera", cerca de una veintena de personas, en su mayoría mujeres, se aglomeraron el miércoles frente a la sede de la embajada de Irán, en el este de la capital, para manifestar contra el gobernante visitante. □



Opositores protestan contra la visita del presidente de Irán, Mahmud Ahmadinejad, frente a la embajada iraní en Caracas, el miércoles 25 de noviembre del 2009. (AP Foto/Leonardo Ramirez)

## Gobierno gestiona ley para sacar a Panamá del Parlacen

PANAMA (AP) - El gobierno presentó el miércoles ante la Asamblea Nacional un proyecto de ley destinado a desligar a Panamá de protocolos y convenios que lo atan al Parlamento Centroamericano (Parlacen).

El vicepresidente y canciller Juan Carlos Varela entregó la iniciativa de ley ante el Congreso, el cual fue llamado a sesiones extraordinarias por el presidente Ricardo Martinelli para que debatiera exclusivamente ese tema, entre el miércoles y martes.

"Este es un paso para implementar la medida que presentamos (el lunes) ante la Cancillería de Guatemala, que es la salida unilateral de Panamá del Parlacen", explicó Varela a la prensa. El proyecto solicita la derogación de los protocolos y tratados firmados por Panamá para adherirse al organismo regional, que tiene su sede en Guatemala y al cual Costa Rica es el único país en Centroamérica que no está adscrito.

Martinelli prometió en su campaña a la presidencia que sacaría a Panamá del Parlacen por considerar que es un foro ineficiente y que no le ha dado ningún beneficio a Panamá ni a la región. Varela ha realizado al menos dos giras por Centroamérica para informar sobre el retiro de Panamá del Parlacen, pero algunos gobiernos y directivos del foro político objetan la salida. □

## Uribe se excusa con Lula por inasistencia a cumbre Manaus

BOGOTÁ (AP) - El presidente Alvaro Uribe informó que por "quebrantos de salud" se ausentará a una cumbre en Brasil, a la que había sido invitado por su colega Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva para tratar asuntos ambientales y previo a la cita sobre cambio climático convocada por Naciones Unidas en Copenhague.

Lula citó a la cumbre de países amazónicos para el 26 de noviembre en la población de Manaus. Entre los invitados figuran los jefes de estado de Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Perú, Bolivia y Guyana, pero hasta ahora sólo han confirmado su asistencia el venezolano Hugo Chávez y el presidente de Guyana, Bharrat Jagdeo.

La reunión en Manaus, además, era vista como una oportunidad para que Chávez y Uribe pudieran encontrarse y tratar, bajo el auspicio de su común amigo Lula, las actuales tensiones entre Bogotá y Caracas, desatadas con un convenio de cooperación

militar colombo-estadounidense y que el dirigente venezolano considera una amenaza a la seguridad nacional de su país.

La participación de Uribe a Manaus había sido confirmada el 18 de noviembre por el canciller Jaime Bermúdez, pero el gobernante envió la víspera a Lula una carta excusándose por no poder asistir.

Aunque la misiva no da detalles sobre esos quebrantos de salud, el presidente ha sido visto cojeando de la pierna izquierda debido a que recibió un golpe de un animal el fin de semana en su finca.

Uribe agregó en su carta que Colombia se esforzaría por lograr "un acuerdo ambicioso" en la conferencia de Copenhague, Dinamarca, citada para la primera quincena de diciembre. Funcionarios de la casa de gobierno indicaron que la delegación colombiana en Manaus estará encabezada por el ministro del Ambiente, Carlos Costa. □

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